

Section Syllabus
ECON 113 American Economic History - Spring 2015

DIS 104 M 11AM-12PM, Room: 4 EVANS
DIS 103 M 12PM-1PM, Room: 285 CORY

GSI: Dmitri Koustas

Email: dkoustas@econ.berkeley.edu (but see email policy below)

Twitter: I will be posting quotes from the readings I find interesting, thought-provoking, funny or odd, to my twitter @dkoust. At your own option, join the conversation using #econ113.

Section Website: I have set up a website for my sections:www.dmitrikoustas.com/teaching/econ113

I will mainly use this website to post section notes, my office hours sign-up sheet, and other materials specific to my sections, and to elicit feedback through online surveys. The first survey is already available and asks you about whether you can make my currently scheduled office hours. Please fill out this survey as soon as possible. You will also need to check bCourses regularly for announcements, and to submit assignments through bCourses.

Office Hours (Tentative): Wed 10:00-11:00AM, Thu 4:30-5:30PM. Room: EVANS 636

So that I can keep track of who is coming, please sign-up for 10 minute office hour slots (if a group has a question, feel free to sign up as a group). The sign-up sheet is available on the section website. Students that sign-up will have first priority. Please don't sign up for OHs more than 1 week in advance.

Letter of Introduction: For next time, please write a one-page letter of introduction of yourself addressed to me. Include your name and anything about yourself that you would like to share. Please include a photo of yourself, as this will help me learn your name. The paper will not be graded or returned. Please bring a hard copy next section. Include your Twitter handle if you want to get participation credit for your tweets!

E-mail policy: Please begin the subject of any email with [ECON 113]. Emailed questions should primarily be administrative-type questions. Office hours, not email, are the place I would prefer to answer your detailed questions, and Piazza should be the main venue for online course-material-related inquiries (see below). I will do my best to answer email questions with 24 hours. If I haven't responded within 48 hours, please resend the message or bring it to my attention in section/ OHs.

Piazza: A better venue for your questions related to course material is [Piazza](#). Because the answer to your question has public good value to your fellow students, the GSIs and professor will note your questions and take more time to respond to these questions here. Students are also encouraged to respond and can receive participation credit for doing so.

Attendance and Grading: Attendance in each of the 12 sections is mandatory, and in total section will count for 36 (out of 500) points of your total grade. Your section grade is determined by three components:

1. 1 point for attendance in section,
2. 1 pt for submitting the pre-section exercise & showing me your reading guides,
3. 1 pt for section/weekly participation.

The pre-section exercise: The pre-section exercise is a series of short questions inspired by the reading from the previous week. Pre-section exercises will be posted on my website each week, and I will collect your answers in section.

Reading guides: Reading guides are available at the course website and at the following links ([.pdf](#), [.doc](#)). Please complete reading guides for each of the week's articles. Hand-written is fine. In each section, I will ask to see your reading guides for the previous week's readings.

Participation: Section time will emphasize active learning. Do not worry about voicing wrong answers or stupid questions—just share what you have to say. I recognize that people participate in different ways and you will have many opportunities to express your engagement with the course material (Twitter, in class discussions, Piazza). Participation points aren't awarded competitively or on a curve, and it's entirely possible for everyone to get 100%.

Format of Paper Submissions: The formatting guidelines are available in the lecture Syllabus. Most of you will likely use Microsoft Word, or a similar word processing software. Writing using $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}/\text{L}^{\text{A}}\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$ has become commonplace in economics writing due to the aesthetically-pleasing layout, ability to insert mathematical characters and other features. For beginners, I recommend using [LyX](#), a WYSIWYM program that has an intuitive GUI. For a more traditional $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$ environment, I recommend [TeXworks](#). I will put Lyx and $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$ templates on my section website.

IMPORTANT NOTE: there is a steep learning curve, and you should only use either of these programs if you have the time and patience to learn them this Semester. I will only accept .pdfs compiled by these programs, and I will not accept "my $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$ code did not compile" as an excuse for a late submission. However, if you come to me with questions WELL IN ADVANCE of an assignment, I can help you troubleshoot any problems.

Laptop/tablet policy: Right now, I have no problem with laptops/ devices for taking notes only. I will ask that you will not use any device to look things up/ give yourself an advantage over the other students during section exercises. Feel free to jot notes down to look up figures/events later, but I think it will be helpful to know what you don't know. Of course, on the exams you will not have your device as a crutch! If it becomes an issue/distraction and students are not using their devices for taking notes, I reserve the right to revoke participation credit for that section.

Grading and Academic Honesty: A computer algorithm [Turnitin](#) will automatically go through your submitted assignments, checking your phrases against various databases. In order to discourage cheating, incentives are structured so that getting caught cheating (plagerizing included) will land you in very big trouble. I don't want to have to watch you go through this, so please do not cheat!

Special Accommodations: Let me and Professor Olney know privately and immediately if you require any special accommodations.

"I was convinced that I wanted to be either an economist or an historian. Really, for me it was a distinction without a difference. If I was going to be an historian, then I would be an economic historian. And if I was to be an economist I would consider history as the basis for my economics. This interest in history informed my academic program."

- [George Akerloff, UC Berkeley Professor and 2001 winner of the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences](#)